

Tuesday's English

Hold Fast to Dreams

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Langston Hughes

Metaphors

A **metaphor** is a comparison in which a place, person or thing is described as if it was another entirely different but similar thing.

Example: *Ben is a greedy pig.*

Ben is not actually a pig - he's a boy - but the comparison to a greedy pig is very effective in telling us that Ben obviously tucks into his food like a farm animal at meal times!

Metaphors very often contain the verbs **is** or **are**, **was** or **were**.

Examples: *The stars **were** jewels in the night sky.*

*Life **is** a journey.*

*The children in my class **are** a dream.*

*He **was** a big baby, moaning about the weather like that.*

Metaphors are different to **similes**

Similes describe people, places, situations or things by comparing them to something that they are like.

Similes either contain the word **like** or the phrase **as...as...**

Examples: *Ben ate **like** a snuffling pig.*

Ben was *as greedy as* a pig.

In **Hold Fast to Dreams**, Langston Hughes uses two **metaphors** to describe a life without dreams as if it is something else.

a broken-winged bird
a barren field

Because Hughes wants to make us see that life without dreams is broken and bleak (bleak means without hope, without life), he employs descriptive metaphors that speak of broken and bleak things or situations.

Think: What *other* images would do this?

How about something abandoned or deserted? Something poisoned or shattered?

Can we add to this ideas bank? You need to think of things and situations that are broken, damaged, incomplete, unfinished or in some other way unsatisfying and unrewarding—just as a life without dreams would be.

Task:

1. Use a thesaurus and the word bank below to help you create an idea bank which has synonyms of broken and bleak, as well as ideas (places, situations) of life without dreams.
2. Then write three metaphors for a life without dreams. You can draw pictures to support! 😊

Verbs

wither decay bleed break shatter rupture implode collapse
break apart shrivel fracture crack fade empty dry up blanch
ossify calcify darken close shut down evaporate disperse scatter
are extinguished

A situation could be...

deserted poisoned abandoned shuttered broken cracked homeless
leafless sunless empty splintered unloved cheerless unfinished lost
smashed snuffed out frozen buried

Verbs for dreams ending

Decay - poisoned

Metaphors for a life without dreams

If dreams decay,
Then life is a poisoned pond.

